



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JAN 31 2011

Office of
International and
Tribal Affairs

Dear Tribal Environmental Director,

My name is JoAnn Chase. I am the new Director of EPA's American Indian Environmental Office. On behalf of EPA and the National EPA-Tribal Science Council, I am pleased to help launch a new process to identify tribal science priorities in Indian country.

One of the primary responsibilities of the tribally-driven EPA-Tribal Science Council is to work collaboratively to identify priority science issues of national significance. The Tribal Science Council has identified an initial set of issues, and has developed objectives and criteria to narrow and prioritize potential priorities. These issues are to initiate the discussion to develop a final set of tribal science priorities. I invite you to provide input as partners with EPA on the significant environmental challenges you face by engaging with the Tribal Science Council through your Regional Tribal Operation Committees, Regional Science Councils, and other Tribal organizations. In addition, we anticipate working closely with the National Tribal Caucus of EPA's National Tribal Operations Committee to further expand our dialogue on the identification of national tribal science priorities throughout this six-month process described in the enclosed Tribal Science Priorities Framework package.

Again, I want to express how excited I am about this new process. The EPA Administrator has made strengthening Tribal partnerships one of her seven priorities. Therefore, we have the opportunity to involve Tribal partners in a national effort to elevate tribal science priorities. EPA will use these priorities to guide our research investments to help reduce health and environmental risk on Tribal lands.

The Tribal Science Priorities Framework materials will be sent to you via mailing and e-mail as well as posted on both the American Indian Tribal Portal and Science in Indian Country web sites found at: <http://www.epa.gov/tribalportal/> and <http://www.epa.gov/osp/tribes/tribes.htm>. Submissions are due by April 1, 2011 and may be sent to Monica Rodia, Executive secretary of the Tribal Science Council at Rodia.Monica@epa.gov.

If you have any questions about the criteria for selecting a priority, steps to complete the template, timeline or the selection process, please contact Jeff Mears at (902) 869-4550, Ted Coopwood at (202) 564-2197 or Monica Rodia at (202) 564-8322.

Sincerely,



JoAnn Chase, Director
American Indian Environmental Office

Enclosure

CC: Michelle Depass
Paul Anastas
Kevin Teichman
Peter Grevatt
Fred Hauchman